AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A performance prediction system, comprising:

at least one memory to store a plurality of computer program components, the computer program components further comprising:

a query component for receiving queries submitted by users for data relevant to the probability that a transaction with an entity will be successful;

a data gathering component for storing relevant data about submitted queries; and

a meta-query component responsive to a meta-query for returning information regarding previously submitted queries; and

at least one data processor to execute the computer program components.

2. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the plurality of computer program components further ~~comprising~~ comprises a performance-prediction component that uses data comprising ~~including~~ the stored submitted query data in making estimations relevant to the likelihood of success of a transaction involving an entity will be successful.

3. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns copies of submitted queries when executed.

4. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns edited copies of submitted queries when executed.

5. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns an indication of a number of queries that have been submitted to the system during a particular time period when executed.

6. (Currently amended) A system as in claim1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a user to register to be notified at some future time of submitted queries that are received about that user.

7. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a user to register to be notified whenever a specified number of queries about that user have been submitted to the system.

8. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the query component when executed also comprises a discovery component that allows users to receive a list of entities that satisfy certain criteria.

9. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a business to obtain information about queries submitted to the system during a particular time period, and which returned a list of companies that include that business.

10. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a business to obtain information about queries submitted to the system during a particular time period, and which returned a list of companies that did not include that business.

11. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the performance prediction component determines statistical correlations between patterns of submitted queries when executed.

12. (Currently amended) A system as in claim 11, where the performance prediction component when executed ~~further~~ uses one of actual and predicted performance of entities, and uses the statistical correlations to predict likely future performance based on past and present query data.

13. (Currently amended) A performance prediction service accessible by a user over a data communications network, said service comprising:

a computer program stored on a computer readable media, wherein the computer program ~~a programmed data processor for using~~ uses acquired knowledge of previously submitted queries when making predictions concerning the future performance of an entity of interest; and

a data processor to execute the computer program product.

14. (Currently amended) A performance prediction service as in claim 13, where said ~~programmed data processor~~ computer program further analyzes query patterns and at least one of an actual or predicted performance of the entity of interest, and observes correlations between queries, query patterns and performance to facilitate the prediction of future performance of the entity of interest when executed by the data processor.

15. (Currently amended) A performance prediction service as in claim 13, where said ~~programmed data processor~~ computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the user, information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest when executed by the data processor.

16. (Currently amended) A performance prediction service as in claim 13, where said ~~programmed data processor~~ computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the user, edited information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest when executed by the data processor.

17. (Currently amended) A performance prediction service as in claim 13, where said ~~programmed data processor~~ computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the user, copies of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest when executed by the data processor.

18. (Original) A performance prediction system, comprising:

a query component for fulfilling received performance queries;

a source of data comprising performance prediction data, the source coupled to said query component;

a data gathering component for collecting query-relevant data for submitted queries and for storing the query-relevant data in a submitted query database; and

a meta-query component responsive to a received meta-query and coupled to the submitted query database for accessing the query-relevant data for producing enhanced performance prediction information that comprises query-relevant information.

19. (Original) The system as in claim 18, wherein the enhanced performance prediction information comprises filtered query-relevant information.

20. (Currently amended) A computer-program-implemented method to provide performance prediction information, where the computer program is stored in a computer-

readable media, the computer-program-implemented method comprising:

receiving queries from users regarding at least one entity of interest; and

using acquired knowledge of previously submitted queries when making predictions concerning the future performance of an entity of interest.

21. (Currently amended) A computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising analyzing query patterns and at least one of an actual or predicted performance of the entity of interest, and observing correlations between queries, query patterns and performance to facilitate the prediction of future performance of the entity of interest.

22. (Currently amended) A computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

23. (Currently amended) A computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, edited information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

24. (Currently amended) A computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, copies of

previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

25. (Currently amended) The computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising collecting query-relevant data comprising at least one of time, date, location, and identity.

26. (Currently amended) The computer-program-implemented method as in claim 25, further comprising filtering the enhanced performance prediction information to remove at least some of the collected query-relevant data.

27. (Currently amended) The computer-program-implemented method as in claim 20, further comprising registering for automatically querying the acquired knowledge.

28. (Currently amended) The computer-program-implemented method as in claim 27, where automatic querying is initiated upon the occurrence of at least one specified criterion.

29. (Original) A computer program product stored on a computer readable media for directing operations of a data processor to execute a method to receive submitted queries for performance prediction information; to collect query-relevant data from the submitted queries; to store the query-relevant data; and to use at least some of the query-relevant data to provide enhanced performance prediction information.

30. (Original) A system for producing enhanced performance prediction information, the system comprising: means for receiving submitted queries; means for storing query-relevant data; and means for producing enhanced performance prediction information that comprises the query-relevant data.

31. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

a communications device for operation with a performance prediction service, comprising a communications interface adapted for at least one of submitting a meta-query to the service and for receiving enhanced performance prediction information from the service; and

the performance prediction service.

Please add the following new claim:

32. (New) The system of claim 31 where the performance prediction service comprises:

a source of data comprising at least performance prediction data, the data source being coupled to a query component adapted for receiving the meta-query and executing the meta-query;

a data gathering component adapted for collecting query-relevant data for fulfilling meta-queries, and storing the query-relevant data in a submitted query database; and

a meta-query component coupled to the submitted query database adapted for

querying the query-relevant data to produce the enhance performance prediction information in response to the reception of the meta-query from the communications device.

33. (New) A computer program product stored on a computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

a query component for receiving queries submitted by users for data relevant to the probability that a transaction with an entity will be successful;

a data gathering component for storing relevant data about submitted queries; and

a meta-query component responsive to a meta-query for returning information regarding previously submitted queries.